

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph at page 3, lines 6-8, as follows:

The filling aid preferably has a rigid terminating element (element 4 in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2) whose density is greater than that of the flexible body at its lower end. Introduction of the filling aid into the tube is aided by such a terminating element.

Please insert the following heading at page 5 before line 29, as follows:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Please amend the paragraph at page 5, lines 29-40, as follows:

In the examples indicated below, a tube 1 is charged with catalyst particles 2. A plurality of parallel tubes 1 form a shell-and-tube reactor which is suitable for carrying out gas-phase oxidation reactions. Before charging of the tube 1, a flexible string 3 which serves as filling aid is introduced into the tube. The string shown in FIG. 1 and Fig. 3 is a smooth string without spacers, while the string shown in FIG. 2 and Fig. 4 is a string into which spacers 5 have been introduced at regular intervals. After the string 3 has been introduced into the tube 1, catalyst particles 2 are poured into the tube 1. As transport device 6 for the catalyst particles 2, it is possible to use either a vibratory chute or a conveyor belt. Furthermore, any number of tubes can be charged simultaneously by combining a plurality of transport devices operating in parallel. In this case, it is possible to use automatic unrolling devices which introduce the strings 3 into the tubes 1 and withdraw them again.